

**TETON DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICER**

**PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER # 21-4**

**ORDER REQUIRING FACE COVERINGS IN K-12 SCHOOLS WITHIN TETON  
COUNTY, WYOMING THROUGH JUNE 11, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Travis Riddell, serves as the Teton District Health Officer pursuant to Wyoming Statute § 35-1-306(a); and

**WHEREAS**, Wyoming Statute § 35-1-240(a)(i), (ii), and (iii) gives the power to the Wyoming Department of Health, through the State Health Officer or under her direction and supervision, or through other employees of the Department of Health to investigate and control the causes or epidemic affecting the public health, and to establish, maintain and enforce isolation and quarantine, and in pursuance thereof, and for such purposes only, to exercise such physical control over property and over the people within this state as the State Health Officer may find necessary for the protection of the public health; and

**WHEREAS**, as evidenced by her signature below, Alexia Harrist, MD, Ph.D., the Wyoming State Health Officer has reviewed and does hereby authorize the issuance of this Order by Dr. Riddell, the Teton District Health Officer, and the State Health Officer, Dr. Harrist, also specifically makes the finding that this Order is necessary for the protection of the public health in Teton County; and

**WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a worldwide pandemic on March 11, 2020<sup>i</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency concerning the coronavirus, specifically stating that “in December 2019 a novel (new) coronavirus known as SARS-Co V-2 was first detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, People's Republic of China, causing outbreaks of the corona virus disease (COVID-19) that has now spread globally. The spread of COVID-19 within our Nation’s communities threatens to strain our Nation’s healthcare systems and cause great economic and social disruption. Additional measures are needed to successfully contain and combat the virus in the United States”; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 13, 2020, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon declared a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency in the State of Wyoming; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Gordon’s Declaration of a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency directs the Wyoming Department of Health to take all appropriate and necessary actions, and that in the judgment of the Director of the Wyoming Department of Health, any actions necessary should be taken to provide aid to those locations where there is a threat or danger to public health, safety, and welfare; and

**WHEREAS**, a significant number of Wyoming citizens are at risk of serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, people with mild symptoms, and even asymptomatic persons with COVID-19 place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is a respiratory illness, transmitted through person-to-person contact or by contact with surfaces contaminated with the virus. Persons infected with COVID-19 may become symptomatic two to fourteen days after exposure<sup>ii</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, respiratory droplets from infected individuals are a major mode of SARS-CoV-2 transmission.<sup>iii</sup> This understanding is the basis of the recommendations for physical distancing, and of the PPE guidance for healthcare workers. Droplets do not only come from coughing or sneezing; in a-/pre-symptomatic individuals, droplets are generated via talking and breathing,<sup>iv</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, Face Coverings reduce droplet dispersal and cloth-coverings reduce emission of particles by variable amounts; and

**WHEREAS**, evidence indicates that wearing Face Coverings reduces the transmissibility per contact by reducing transmission of infected droplets; and

**WHEREAS**, in the most comprehensive, systematic review and meta-analysis of Face Coverings published to date, Chu *et al.* found that Face Coverings could reduce risk of transmission of COVID-19 by an expected 85 percent;<sup>v</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, guidelines published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated on May 15, 2021, recommend use of Face Coverings in K-12 Schools for the 2020-2021 academic year because the majority of K-12 students will not have had an opportunity to be fully vaccinated prior to the end of the school year. The CDC also advises the use of a simple Face Covering to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know from transmitting it to others; and<sup>vi</sup>

**WHEREAS**, Statewide Public Health Order #1 (more specifically, known as the Amended 27<sup>th</sup> Continuation of Statewide Public Health Order Regarding Child Care Facilities, K-12 Schools, Colleges, Universities, and Trade Schools) ends on May 31, 2021. Schools in Teton County go through June 11, 2021. Thus, the same Face Covering requirements as required in the previous statewide order will be ordered in Teton County from June 1 through June 11, 2021.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** as follows:

1. "Face Covering," as used in this Order, means a covering made of cloth, fabric, or other soft or permeable material, without holes, that covers the nose and mouth and surrounding areas of the lower face.
2. Students, teachers, school staff, and visitors in K-12 schools (including parents, families, and members of the public) shall wear Face Coverings indoors where 6 feet of separation between individuals cannot be maintained.
3. A Face Covering is not required under the following circumstances:
  - a. Children who are younger than three years of age;



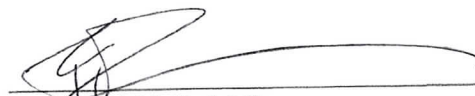
- b. Individuals with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a Face Covering, including an individual with a medical condition for whom wearing a Face Covering could cause harm or dangerously obstruct breathing. K-12 schools shall require documentation from the student's parent or guardian, or the student's medical provider, that the student meets this exception;
- c. Individuals who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a Face Covering without assistance;
- d. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing while communicating with others, or individuals who are communicating with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication, in which case it is recommended that a face shield or alternative protection such as a plexiglass barrier be used (a face shield is a personal protective equipment device which protects the person's entire face from potentially infectious materials);
- e. Individuals who have an Individual Education Program (IEP) under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1414, or an accommodation under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, that would necessitate exempting the individual from wearing a Face Covering;
- f. Children for whom a Face Covering may interfere with the ability to effectively participate in education activities or may increase the risk of disease transmission because of increased hand to face contact;
- g. Individuals engaged in athletic activities or performances; or
- h. When an individual is eating or drinking.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the Teton District Health Officer may grant exceptions to this Order on a case-by-case basis after evaluating the request; and

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that this Order shall become effective on June 1, 2021, and remain in effect through June 11, 2021, or until such time as the Teton District Health Officer, with the State Health Officer's approval, issues an Order revoking or modifying this Order; and

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that any or person that violates this Order may be subject to criminal prosecution under Wyoming Statutes §§ 35-1-105 and 35-1-106.

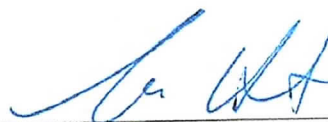
**DATED** this 24 day of May, 2021.



Travis Riddell, M.D.  
Teton District Health Officer

### Direction to Issue Order

I, Alexia Harrist, MD, Ph.D., the Wyoming State Health Officer, hereby state that I have reviewed the above Order and hereby direct, pursuant to Wyoming Statute §§ 35-1-227 and 35-1-240(a)(i), (ii), and (iii), the Teton District Health Officer to issue the above Order, in Teton County, Wyoming. As the State Health Officer, I specifically find that this Order is necessary for the protection of public health in Teton County. I will reassess the necessity of this Order as appropriate and in accordance with accepted epidemiological and medical standards.



Alexia Harrist, M.D., PhD  
Wyoming State Health Officer

<sup>i</sup> Wyoming Department of Health Infectious Disease and Epidemiology Unit. *COVID-19 Map and Statistics*. Available: <https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/infectious-disease-epidemiology-unit/disease/novel-coronavirus/covid-19-map-and-statistics/>. (Accessed: 10/30/2020).

<sup>ii</sup> United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): How to Protect Yourself & Others*. Available: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html> (Accessed: 10/30/2020)

<sup>iii</sup> World Health Organization. 2020 Modes of transmission of virus causing COVID-19: implications for IPC precaution recommendations. Available <http://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/modes-of-transmission-of-virus-causing-covid-19-implications-for-ipc-precaution-recommendations>. (Accessed: 10/30/2020)

<sup>iv</sup> Anfinrud P., Stadnytskyi V., Bax CE., Bax A. 2020, *Visualizing Speech-Generated Oral Fluid Droplets with Laser Light Scattering*. New England Journal of Medicine. Available: <https://nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmc2007800> (Accessed 10/30/2020)

<sup>v</sup> Chu DK, AKL EA, Duda S, et al. *Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: a systemic review and meta-analysis* (published June 1, 2020) Available: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)31142-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31142-9) (Accessed: 10/30/2020)

<sup>vi</sup> United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention*. Available: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html> (Accessed: 05/21/2020)